



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner

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NEWS RELEASE

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Little Rock Teacher Named Milken Award Winner

LITTLE ROCK—Zsuzsanna Diamond went to school today thinking it was just another day.

She was in for a surprise. Shortly after lunch, Governor Mike Beebe, Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Commissioner of Education, and Dr. Gary Stark of the Milken Family Foundation, greeted her in the cafeteria of Otter Creek Elementary.

They were there to present Diamond, a fourth-grade classroom teacher, a 2012 Milken Educator Award.

Diamond has taught in the Little Rock School District for five years. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in elementary education from Mihaly Csokonsi Vitez Teacher's Training College in Kaposvar, Hungary.

Zsuzsanna Diamond is recognized around her district as a passionate and creative educator with a special talent to connect with all kids. Her ability to foster an open, community type classroom environment has proven effective for students and has earned her the respect of her colleagues. She is highly involved in the school helping with everything from curriculum development to providing professional learning. Diamond's energy, enthusiasm and ability to understand students' diverse needs make her truly stand out. In recognition of all she has contributed, she was selected as one of ten participants from the Little Rock School District to attend the Exxon Mobil-Mickelson Math and Science Institute in 2011.

"Great teachers change lives, inspire excellence and shape the future," said Commissioner of Education Dr. Tom Kimbrell. "They come to work each day excited to share their love of learning, knowing they can make a difference. They believe in their students and work tirelessly to help them reach their potential. But far too often, these dedicated educators do not receive the appreciation or recognition they deserve. The Milken Family Foundation is committed to changing that, shining the light on the profession and saying a very big thank you to outstanding young educators like Zsuzsanna Diamond for all they do every day."

The Milken award, which comes with an unrestricted payment of \$25,000, honors exceptional educators for their work. Each recipient receives the award in a surprise ceremony. Educators do not apply for the award, nor are they aware they have been nominated for the honor.

This fall, about 40 educators around the country will receive Milken Family Foundation 2012 Milken Educator Awards. The program has been administered in Arkansas since 1991, and there have been 69 Milken Award winners so far in the state.

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